

CONFIDENTIAL

WEEKLY HOT ISSUES REPORT for RA/DRA Region 8

Week ending November 3, 2017

OFFICE OF PARTNERSHIPS AND REGULATORY ASSISTANCE

This Week (will move this to WAR)

Release of the Draft Fourth National Climate Assessment for Public Review and Comment:

Key Message: The U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) is releasing the draft fourth National Climate Assessment for public comment on Friday, November 3, 2017. Notice will be published in the **Federal Register**. USGCRP was established by Presidential Initiative in 1989 and mandated by Congress in the Global Change Research Act (GCRA) of 1990 to “assist the Nation and the world to understand, assess, predict, and respond to human-induced and natural processes of global change.” More information about USGCRP can be found at this website: <http://www.globalchange.gov/nca4>.

- Laura Farris, in the EPA Region 8 Air Program, is a contributor to the report.
- Laura authored the Energy Section of the Northern Great Plains Chapter.
- Fifteen other EPA staff members in various offices including Office of Air and Radiation, Office of Water, and Office of Research and Development are also contributing authors.
- The final report is planned to be released in late 2018.
- Contact: Laura Farris, 312-6388

This is Hot Issue
NEXT 30 DAYS

Meridian Energy Group, Proposed Davis Refinery Project in North Dakota

Key Message: The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDH) has drafted a synthetic minor air permit for the proposed Davis Refinery project planned to be constructed west of Belfield, North Dakota, in Billings County near Theodore Roosevelt National Park. There is a high level of public interest in this project partly due to its close proximity to the park (approximately three miles from the eastern boundary). The refinery will have a 55,000 barrel per-day processing capacity and is being designed to produce refined products including gasoline, diesel fuel, jet fuel and fuel oil, as well as liquefied petroleum gas.

- NDDH plans to begin the public comment period on the draft permit around November 10, 2017.
- NDDH has been working with the company to develop a complete application since March 2016.
- Region 8 Air Program, along with federal land managers, has been participating in monthly calls arranged by NDDH to coordinate on the permit development. We do not typically review states’ “synthetic minor” source construction permits, but NDDH invited our involvement due to the public interest in this project.
- The Air Program was provided the opportunity to review the pre-draft permit for about a week and verbally shared our comments with NDDH recommending that annual testing (for unit specific air pollutants) and fence-line monitoring for benzene be included as permit conditions to ensure the refinery meets its synthetic minor limits. NDDH indicates our comments will result in some revisions, but we will not be provided with a final draft prior to the public comment period. We can submit written comments during the public comment period, if we deem it necessary.
- **Exemption 5, Deliberative**

- The project construction is planned for two phases with the initial phase to be completed in early 2018 and the full refinery to follow 18 to 24 months after the initial phase.
- Contacts: Gail Fallon, 312-6281; Donald Law, 312-7015